

**PWS DRAFT 2
Comments
Contract
IRS Files Activity**

Comment Provided By	Page Number	PWS Paragraph Number	Comment	CO Response
Question 1			Does it (performance) have to be at this location(s) or can it be at the contractor's site.	Currently as written the PWS allows potential service providers to propose performance at the government sites or at contractor-owned facilities. However, in order to resolve privacy and security concerns pertaining to taxpayer returns as well as ensuring the opportunity is not cost prohibitive to potential service providers, the government is taking action to require mandatory use of Government Furnished Facilities and Property. As a result, performance may be required at the government locations identified in the PWS.
Question 2			While I understand that this request may be too early as you have just issued an RFI, would you please let us know whether you have an idea of any potential bidders or a formal bidders list that is available?	We will publish a list of those vendors registered on the IRS Web Site who consent to having their contact information published.
Question 3			What is the number of FTE's under study, by location?	The number of FTE under study is approximately 1,270. Specific FTE numbers for each location will not be provided.

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Question 4			Proposal preparation period: Given the scope of this requirement we would expect to see a minimum sixty days and recommend 90 days between announcement and proposals due to allow sufficient time for respond this requirement.	The government plans to allow 90 days to prepare and submit proposals. This time frame includes all service provider site visits.
Question 5			Provide appropriate performance incentives: The performance standards included in the technical exhibit already establish stringent response times. We would not suggest award incentives unless the Internal Revenue Service sees value in the contractor performing at a level above the performance requirements.	The government will consider your comment and keep it under advisement as we develop the Request for Proposal.
Question 6			What is the government's planned time for proposal submission? Given the scope and complexity of this requirement we would expect to see a minimum sixty days and recommend 90 days between announcement and proposals due to allow sufficient time for respond this requirement.	Refer to response for Question 4.
Question 7			The government has provided performance standards and expectations for each of the major tasks of this anticipated services contract in the form of "Technical Exhibit 1-001 Performance Requirements Summary (PRS)", will the government pay performance bonuses for exceeding these measures? We believe the government should pay for performance. The contractor should be rewarded for providing exceptional service and should be penalized a commensurate amount for non-compliance.	Refer to response for Question 5.

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Question 8			What type of contract does the government anticipate granting? Will there be a provision for small business? For women owned business? For JWOD? Or is it the intent of the government to award this contract to a large, multi-national US based company?	The government anticipates awarding a fixed price contract. The remaining issues are still being considered and a final determination will be made prior to release of the final RFP.
Question 9			<p>Respondent estimates a time period of about 90 days as adequate to respond to any RFP the IRS might issue. This time period will allow us to visit four to five sites, analyze any data or information that is provided, and study any process variances, anomalies or unique requirements that might exist. It would also provide the time needed for IRS to host any conferences or information briefs for interested service providers. With 90 days, we would be able to make a proposal that represents a great value to the IRS in terms of technical expertise, experience and price.</p> <p>If the IRS, in this request for information, has assumed that site visits, conferences/information briefs, data availability and responses to requests for clarification will have been accomplished before the countdown begins on the allowed period to respond, we believe that 45 days will be adequate.</p>	Refer to response for question 4.
Question 10			Respondent assumes that a primary objective for the IRS is to achieve specified production levels in the conduct of all activities associated with the Records-Files Management Services. Furthermore, the IRS would require that the quality of work be of the highest standards. Respondent believes firmly that superior performance deserves recognition. Our management philosophy stresses reward for exceptional performance. To provide incentive to the contractor(s) performing these Records Files Management Services, a set of performance criteria will need to be defined that rewards superior achievement.....	Refer to response for question 5.

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Question 11			In the event a contract is awarded will the Service Provider be required to submit Minimum Background Investigation (MBI) paperwork on incumbent employees who accept employment with the Service Provider and who already possess appropriate security clearance?	Yes, because they would no longer be government employees. The government will determine the sufficient level of investigation.
Question 12			What are the current staffing levels by grade level at each site?	This information will not be provided.
Question 13			Are all employees required to undergo an MBI?	Yes.
Question 14			If a RFQ/RFP is issued, will the IRS provide a copy of the Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan and any Quality Control Plan that exists to the winning bidder?	Yes. The government will release the quality assurance surveillance plan after award to the selected service provider.
Question 15			Will GSA schedules be allowed for the procurement of office supplies?	Refer to Section 3.3 of the PWS. The procurement of "general office supplies" or those not captured in Section 3.3 are at the discretion of the service provider.
Question 16			Is there an existing safety plan and can we have that plan if we are the winning bidder?	No. Service provider must develop their own safety plan as a requirement of the solicitation. Safety plans will be evaluated as a part of the technical submission in considering the award determination.

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Question 17			There are requirements for employees to attend Annual Physical Security Briefings, Annual Disclosure Awareness Briefings, and the Annual Unauthorized Access Awareness Briefings. Does the IRS provide the contractor with adequate flexibility as to staffing the required work schedules to allow employees to attend these briefings without causing undue hardship on either the customer or the service provider?	Language has been added to Section 1.5.4 for the service provider to provide uninterrupted service to customers while attending required briefings. The training can be obtained on-line and multiple sessions are conducted to provide the selected service provider with adequate flexibility to meet the subject requirement while simultaneously maintaining required services.
Question 18			<p>With a clear understanding of the workflow, and proper onsite time, we feel that a proposal preparation period of 6-8 weeks is adequate to address all requirements.</p> <p>Provide appropriate performance incentives. Provide possible performance incentives and the advantages and disadvantages of each suggested incentive</p> <p>Respondent utilizes[omitted Intentionally]</p> <p>There are no disadvantages, in structuring the contract as such. The benefit of hitting and exceeding targets will exceed the cost of bonus, so there is no real financial disadvantage.</p> <p>Of course, the values represented above are an example. Our preference would be to structure a win/win for both IRS and respondent.</p>	Refer to responses to questions 4 and 5.
Question 19			Proposal preparation period: In order to address all requirements, respondent would need 90 days to prepare a proposal.	Refer to response to question 4.

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Question 20			Proposal Preparation Period – Respondent believes that a period of one month is adequate to respond to a solicitation of this nature. Some recent research indicates that the entire procurement schedule should approximate 5 months.	Refer to response to question 4.
Question 21			<p>Performance Incentives – Respondent would be happy to approach this opportunity on an Award Fee basis. Our initial analysis identifies four main areas where incentives can emphasize the most important performance aspects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Customer Satisfaction – is THE key area due to involvement of the public and the importance of the information and documents to individuals. Speed of response, accuracy of response, professionalism of response (courtesy, etc.) all can and should be measured. b. Document Handling – accuracy of filing, organization of files, ease of retrieval are all measurable aspects that are critical to performance. c. Staff Training and Information Retention – Amount invested by firm in training is a key feature including follow-up testing/surveying to determine retention of information by staff as well as utility of the information provided. d. Staff Retention – particularly at contract outset and for first two years a significant challenge will be the privatization of the Government staff in a harmonious manner. Retention of those on staff who will be necessary to ensure that the work continues uninterrupted is not a trivial matter. 	Refer to response to question 5.

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Question 22			<p>General - The Respondent is currently a Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB) and if this solicitation were to be conducted using 561110 we would be pleased to be a subcontractor and mentor to a smaller company. We believe, however, that this solicitation would provide a significant challenge for companies of this size even if it was geographically separated into 9 different solicitations. Emphasis on very small businesses is commendable but not to the point of setting them up to fail. We believe that the retention problem cited above can only be exacerbated by asking Government employees to confidently put their futures in the hands of a very small business. We would recommend that the size standard be changed to a larger code such as 517110 (1500) or 516110 (500) to enable more viable sized companies to respond to this opportunity but still stay within the small business standard. This has been done recently on a procurement where we were awarded a contract. The same thought process has also influenced the [intentionally omitted]_____ procurement. Respondent would be happy to provide Government contact points for these major procurements should IRS so desire.</p>	<p>This issue is still being considered and a determination will be made prior to the final RFP being released which will clarify the appropriate NAICS code.</p>

File: PWS Questions for Release Final